(d) The details are as under:

(i) Shri K.S. Krishnamurthy, Passport Officer 25.9.89 to 18.12.89

(ii) Shri G.V. Venkateshwaran, Public Relations Officer 19.12.89 to 16.4.90

(iii) Shri J.R. Ambre, Superintendent 26.11.90 to 25.7.94

(iv) Shri A.K. Sarkar, Superintendent 26.7.94

(e) Various steps are being taken to improve the efficiency of the Passport Office which include inter alia augmentation of staff strength, improving the infrastructure of the officers, regular inspections of the Passport Offices from time to time and implementation of the inspection reports.

Broad-Basing the Central Haj Committee

2872. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of members in the Central Haj Committee, Bombay and the different interests they represent;

(b) whether Government will consider broad basing the Central Haj Committee in view of the decentralisation of Haj flights by giving representation to various States;

(c) whether Government are giving financial assistance to the Haj Committee; if so, what is the total assistance given during 1992-93 and 1993-94; and

(d) whether the Haj Committee generated any income; if so, the income of Haj Committee during 1991—94, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) The Central Haj Committee consists of 19 members of whom six are ex-officio members. The constitution of the Central Haj Committee is provided for under Clause 4(1) of the Haj Committee Act of 1959. The nominated members of the Committee consists of two nominees of the Central Government, three members of Parliament (two from the Lok Sabha and one from the Rajya Sabha), a nominee of the Maharashtra Government, two members of Legislative Assembly and two members of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay. Additionally there are six ex-officio members drawn from the Government Departments of Customs, Port Trust, Mercantile Marine, Police, Municipal Commissioner and Port Health Authority of Bombay. The nominated and ex-officio members co-opt three additional members, two of whom are Shias.

(b) Until the mid-60s, all the pilgrims used to travel by sea from Bombay. With the introduction of air travel and subsequent increase in departure points for the pilgrims travelling by air to include Delhi, Madras and Calcutta besides Bombay, State Haj Committees have been constituted to assist in the organisation of logistics and other matters for pilgrims going from their States. As a result of decentralisation in the arrangements for logistics for the Haj pilgrims, State Haj Committee have also been conducting draw of lots (qurrah) for the selection of pilgrims from their respective State.

Government of India have been contemplating the introduction of fresh legislation to replace the Haj Committee Act of 1959 keeping in view, inter alia, the question of regional representation in the Central Haj Committee and making it broad-based.

(c) Government extends no financial assistance to the Central Haj Committee. Facilities are provided for the Haj pilgrims through organisation of administrative and medical services in Saudi Arabia and concessional sea/air fares are offered to the pilgrims going for Haj under the arrangements made through the Central Haj Committee.

(d) Central Haj Committee collects a pilgrim Pass Fee @ Rs. 100 per pilgrim and a contribution on account of Haj House donation @ Rs. 150 per pilgrim.

Besides interest on its fixed deposit, the Central Haj Committee generated the following income during the last three years:—

Year	Pilgrim Pass Registration Fee	Haj House Donations
1991-92	Rs. 17,87,780.00	Rs. 29,80,400.00
1992-93	Rs. 24,58,400.00	Rs. 32,76,950.00
1993-94	Rs. 25,19,400.00	Rs. 34,32,600.00

Demarcation of Maritime Boundaries with Pakistan and Bangladesh

2873. SHRI S. AUSTIN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any progress has been made in the bilateral negotiations on demarcation of maritime boundaries with Pakistan in the Arabian Sea and with Bangladesh in the Bay of Bengal;

(b) if so, the exact status of negotiations; and

(c) the reasons for delay in the conclusion of agreements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): BANGLADESH: (a) Indo-Bangladesh talks on demarcation of maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal were first held in November 1974. The last round of talks was held in August 1982. Despite these talks, no substantial progress has been achieved so far.

(b) The matter is pursued through diplomatic channels in order to seek resumption of the above mentioned talks.

(c) No agreement has been concluded because of divergent approaches and viewpoints of the two sides.

PAKISTAN: (a) to (c) We have held five rounds of discussions with Pakistan with a view to demarcating the India-Pakistan maritime boundary in the Sir Creek area. The last round of talks on the issue were held at New Delhi on 5-6 November, 1992 during which the two sides had a detailed exchange of views. However, the differences in the interpretation of the boundary in the Sir Creek area persist.

Government have since conveyed to Pakistan certain constructive and specific suggestions which can form the basis of a comprehensive and meaningful dialogue on the issue.

South Africa seeks India's assistance in skilled/professional manpower

2874. SHRI T. VENKATRAM REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the new Government of South Africa has approached the Government for assistance in respect of skilled/professional manpower, mechineries etc. from India for their developmental schemes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) to (c) The Government is discussing various aspects of bilateral cooperation with the Government of South Africa. The Government of India has offered technical and other assistance to the new South African Government.

Foreign countries to persuade Pakistan to solve disputes bilaterally

2875. SHRI T. VENKATRAM REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any requests to some foreign countries to persuade Pakistan to work towards a bilaterally negotiated settlement to the outstanding issues between the two countries including Kashmir instead of internationalising the issues; and

(b) if so, the names of such countries and their reaction thereto?